



Puget Sound Regional Council

1011 WESTERN AVENUE, SUITE 500 \ \ \ SEATTLE, WA 98104•1035 \ \ \ psrc.org \ \ \ 206•464•7090

January 16, 2019

Pierce County Regional Council
Chair Councilmember Tom Swanson

Subject: Plan Amendment 891623, City of Buckley: Expand City of Buckley's UGA
By 156 parcels

Dear Councilmember Swanson and PCRC members,

I look forward to the upcoming Pierce County Regional Council meeting on Thursday. The opportunity to expand the Urban Growth Area adjacent to the city of Buckley is a complex case that raises several challenging questions for the council to consider. It is helpful to have the option of making UGA adjustments and while GMCC looked at the UGA banking opportunity, there were other questions that the PCRC may want to consider.

Mayor Johnson's letter dated January 9, 2019, indicates the city's opposition to a reduced expansion proposed by the county. Considering that the reduced expansion would not meet the city's original intent or be acceptable to the city, is the reduced expansion option still being considered?

How would the expanded UGA be served with urban services and what impact would it have on the surrounding communities? Buckley has been working on utility plans, but has not completed the capital facilities and utilities elements of its comprehensive plan and the plan hasn't yet been certified. Those are important chapters to show how the city would provide service to the new urban area and how utility plans are consistent with land use.

What impact would increased urban development have on transportation facilities and how would it impact traffic on nearby communities?

Would the proposal be consistent with GMA and the CPPs? The county staff report states that the city's original "proposal is inconsistent with the provisions of the Growth Management, Pierce County Countywide Planning Policies, and the Pierce County Comprehensive Plan in relation to UGA expansion." The staff report isn't clear how the modified UGA proposal better conforms with the Act and policies than the city's proposal.

How rapidly is land within Buckley being used? The city's comprehensive plan shows it growing by 315 people over 14 years (4,115 to 4,430) and indicates that it has existing capacity to grow by more than 3,000 additional people by 2035. Is the expanded UGA needed to support anticipated residential or commercial growth and is it urgent?

Looking at the option of creating a UGA for Buckley so that the city can plan for the future makes a lot of sense, but if the city doesn't need it now, it may be better to address in the future when the county and the city are more aligned in the solution. The new UGA bank is a great tool that gives the county the ability to hold on to the UGA amount from Gig Harbor; with the bank there's no need to make an immediate swap. The bank also provides the ability to add other UGA reductions together over time so that someday the bank could better address the city's needs.

I recently talked with the Buckley staff and am hoping to help the city complete the remaining two chapters of its comprehensive plan update so that PSRC can certify its plan this spring. Having a completed and certified comprehensive plan will put the city in a better position for addressing the planning needs for the UGA.

I appreciate the opportunity to submit these questions about the UGA proposals and look forward to the discussion.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Paul Inghram". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Paul Inghram
Director of Growth Management